GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3213
ANSWERED ON:28.07.2009
ASSISTANCE TO ORANGE GROWERS
Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the orange growers are facing problems due to receding ground water level in the country including Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the orange growers have urged for digging of community water tanks for storage of run off water;

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(e) whether the Government of Maharashtra has sent a proposal for increasing post harvest management and marketing subsidy amount and the budget for community tanks; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Union Government thereon?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) & (b): There is no specific information about the problem being faced by the orange growers due to receding ground water level in the country. However, as per the information provided by the State Government of Maharashtra the ground water level is receding in the Orange Growing belt in Maharashtra.

(c) & (d): The President, Maharashtra State Orange Growers Association has demanded to increase the budgetary allocation for community farm ponds under National Horticulture Mission. (NHM).

To give protective irrigation to the fruit crops, the component of community tanks/ponds has been included under NHM. During the year 2009-10, a provision of Rs.864.93 lakhs has been made to complete 564 ongoing community tanks and Rs.349.92 lakh for 72 new community tanks in the State of Maharashtra. Besides, during 2009-10, assistance of Rs.144.00 crore has been provided under the scheme of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) for farms ponds, repair of Bodis and Malgujari tanks.

(e) & (f): Yes, Madam. The proposal for increasing the subsidy amount for the Post Harvest Management and Marketing is under consideration of the Government.

A proposal for increasing the budget allocation of community tanks from 15% to 33% under NHM has been received from the Government of Maharashtra. As the major focus of NHM scheme is on the holistic development of horticulture by additional area coverage, setting up of nurseries and creation of infrastructure for post harvest management and marketing, earmarking of funds to the tune of 33% of the outlay for construction of water tanks/ponds along, is not feasible.

Moreover, several other schemes of the Government like RKVY, National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) and Watershed Development scheme also provides assistance for the development of water harvesting structures.